Praise Your God, O Zion!

DELIVERED ON SUNDAY MORNING. FEBRUARY 25, 1866,

BY C. H. SPURGEON, AT THE METROPOLITAN TABERNACLE, NEWINGTON.

"And when He was come near, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen, saying, Blessed is the King that comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in Hea ven, and glory in the highest! And some of the Pharisees from among the multitude said unto Him, Master, rebuke Your disciples. But He answered and said unto them, I tell you that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out."

Luke 19:37-40.

THE Savior was "a man of sorrows," but every thoughtful mind has discovered the fact that down deep in His innermost soul He must have carried an inexhaustible treasury of refined and heavenly joy. I suppose that of all the human race there was never a man who had a deeper, purer, or more abiding peace than our Lord Jesus Christ. "He was anointed with the oil of gladness above His fellows." Benevolence is joy. The highest benevolence must, from the very nature of things, have afforded the deepest possible delight.

To be engaged in the most blessed of all errands, to foresee the marvelous results of His labors in time and in eternity, and even to see around Him the fruits of the good which He had done in the healing of the sick and the raising of the dead must have given to such a sympathetic heart as that which beat within the bosom of the Lord Jesus Christ much of secret satisfaction and joy. There were a few remarkable seasons when this joy manifested itself. "At that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit and said, I thank You, O Father, Lord of Heaven and earth." Christ had His songs though it was night with Him. And though His face was marred and His countenance had lost the luster of earthly happiness, yet sometimes it was lit up with a matchless splendor of unparalleled satisfaction as He thought upon the recompense of the reward, and in the midst of the congregation sang His praise unto God. In this, the Lord Jesus is a blessed picture of His Church on earth.

This is the day of Zion's trouble—at this hour the Church expects to walk in sympathy with her Lord along a thorny road. She is outside the camp—through much tribulation she is forcing her way to the crown. She expects to meet with reproaches. To bear the cross is her office, and to be scorned and counted an alien by her mother's children is her lot. And yet the Church has a deep well ofjoy of which none can drink but her own children! There are stores of wine, and oil, and corn hidden in the midst of our Jerusalem upon which the saints of God are evermore sustained and nurtured. And sometimes, as in our Savior's case, we have our seasons of intense delight for "there is a river, the streams which make glad the city of our God."

Exiles though we are, we rejoice in our King! Yes, in Him we exceedingly rejoice, while in His name we set up our banners! This is a season with us as a Church when we are peculiarly called upon to rejoice in God. The Lord Jesus, in the narrative before us, was going to Jerusalem as His disciples fondly hoped, to take the throne of David and set up the long-expected kingdom. Well might they shout for joy, for the Lord was in their midst—in their midst in state, riding amidst the acclamations of a multitude who had been glad partakers of His goodness. Jesus Christ is in our midst today! The kingdom is securely His. We see the crown glittering upon His brow. He has been riding through our streets, healing our blind, raising our dead and speaking words of comfort to our mourners!

We, too, attend Him in state today, and the acclamations of little children are not lacking, for from our Sunday school there have come songs of converted youngsters who sing gladly, as did the children of Jerusalem in days of yore, "Hosanna! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord!"

I want, dear Friends, this morning, to stir up in all of us the spirit of holy joy because our King is in our midst! I wish that we may welcome Him and rejoice in Him, and that while He is working His mighty deeds of salvation throughout this congregation so graciously, He may not lack such music as our feeble lips can afford Him. I shall, therefore, invite your attention to these four verses by way of example, that we may take a pattern for our praise from this inspired description.

We shall observe four things—First, delightful praise. Secondly, appropriate song, Thirdly, intrusive objections, and fourthly, an unanswerable argument.

I. First, we shall observe here DELIGHTFUL PRAISE. In the thirty-seventh verse every word is significant and deserves the careful notice of all who would learn aright the lesson of how to magnify the Savior. To begin with, the praise rendered to Christ was speedy praise. The happy choristers did not wait till He had entered the city, but "when He was come near, even now at the descent of the Mount of Olives, they began to rejoice." It is well to have a quick eye to perceive occasions for gratitude.

Blind Unbelief and blear-eyed Thanklessness allow the favors of God to be forgotten in ingratitude, and, without praises, die. They walk in the noonday of Mercy and see no light to sing by. But a believing, cheerful, grateful spirit detects at once the rising of the Sun of Mercy and begins to sing, even at the break of day! Christian, if you would sing of the mercy you have already, you would soon have more! If twilight made you glad, you should soon have the bliss of noon! I am certain that the Church in these days has lost much by not being thankful for little. We have had many Prayer Meetings, but few, very few, Praise Meetings—as if the Church could cry loud enough when her own ends were to be answered—but was dumb as to music for her Lord.

Her King acts to her very much as He did with the man with the pound. That man put not out the pound to interest and therefore it was taken away. We have not thanked Him

for little mercies, and therefore even these have been removed, and Churches have become barren and deserted by the Spirit of God. Let us lift up the voice of praise to our Master because He has blessed us these twelve years. We have had a continual stream of revival! The cries of sinners have sounded in our ears—every day we have seen souls converted—I was about to say almost every hour of the week, and that by the space of these twelve years, and of late, we have had a double portion!

Benjamin's mess has been set near our place at the table! We have been made to feast on royal dainties and have been filled with bread even to the full. Shall we not then praise God? Ah, let us not require twice telling of it, but let our souls begin to praise Him, even now, that He comes near unto Jerusalem!

It strikes us at once, also, that this was unanimous praise. Observe, not only the multitude, but the whole multitude of the disciples rejoiced and praised Him! Not one silent tongue among the disciples—not one who withheld his song. And yet, I suppose, those disciples had their trials as we have ours. There might have been a sick wife at home, or a child withering with disease. They were doubtless poor—we know they were—and poverty is never without its pinches. They were men of like passions with ourselves. They had to struggle with inbred sin, and with temptation, and yet there seems to have been no one who on those grounds excluded himself from the choir of singers on that happy day!

Oh, my Soul, whatever you have about you which might bow you down, be glad when you remember that Jesus Christ is glorified in the midst of His Church! Why, my Brother, is that harp of yours hanging on the willows? Have you nothing to sing about? Has He done nothing for you? Why, if you have no personal reason for blessing God, then lend us your heart and voice to help us, for we have more praise-work on hand than we can get through alone—we have more to praise Him for than we are able to discharge without extra aid! Our work of praise is too great for us, come and help us! Sing on our behalf, if you cannot on your own, and then, perhaps, you will catch the flame and find something, after all, for which you, too, must bless Him.

I know there are some of you who do not feel as if you could praise God this morning. Let us ask the Master to put your harp in tune. Oh be not silent! Be not silent! Bless Him! If you cannot bless Him for temporals, bless Him for spirituals! And if you have not of late experimentally enjoyed many of these, then bless Him for what He is. Bless Him for that dear face covered with the bloody sweat—for those pierced hands, for that opened side will you not praise Him? Why, surely, if He had not died for me I must still love Him, to think of His goodness in dying for others! His kindness, the generosity of His noble heart in dying for His enemies might well provoke the most unbelieving to a song.

I am, therefore, not content unless all of you will contribute your note. I would have every bird throw in its note, though some cannot imitate the lark or nightingale! Yes, I would have every tree of the forest clap its hands, and even the hyssop on the wall wave in adoration!

Come, Beloved, cheer up! Let dull care and dark fear be gone! Up with harps and down with doubts! It must be praise from "the whole multitude." The praise must be unanimous—not one chord out of order to spoil the tune.

Next, it was multitudinous. "The whole multitude." There is something most inspiriting and exhilarating in the noise of a multitude singing God's praises. Sometimes, when we have been in good tune, and have sung "Praise God from whom all blessings flow," our music has rolled upward like thunder to yon dome and has reverberated peal on peal! These have been the happiest moments some of us have ever known—when every tongue was praise, and every heart was joy! Oh, let us renew those happy times! Let us anticipate the season when the dwellers in the East and in the West, in the North and in the South, of every age and of every clime shall assemble on the celestial hilltops and swell the everlasting song extolling Jesus Lord of all!

Jesus loves the praise of many. He loves to hear the voices of all the blood-washed—

> "Ten thousand thousand are their tongues, But all their joys are one."

We are not so many as that, but we are counted by thousands so let us praise His name—the whole multitude! Still it is worthy of observation that while the praise was multitudinous, it was quite select. It was the whole multitude "of the disciples." The Pharisees did not praise Him—they were murmuring. All true praise must come from true hearts. If you do not learn of Christ you can not render to Him acceptable song. These disciples, of course, were of different sorts. Some of them had but just enlisted in the army—just learned to sit at His feet. Some had worked miracles in His name, and, having been called to the Apostolic office, had preached the Word to others—but they were all disciples.

I trust that in this congregation there is a vast majority of disciples—well, then, all of you, you who have lately come into His school, you who have long been in it—you who have become fathers in Israel and are teaching others, the whole multitude of disciples, I hope, will praise God! I could wish—God grant the wish—I could wish that those who are not disciples might soon become so. "Take My yoke upon you," He said, "and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart."

A disciple is a learner. You may not know much, but you need not know anything in coming to Christ! Christ begins with ignorance and bestows wisdom. If you do but know that you know nothing, you know enough to become a disciple of Christ Jesus! There is no matriculation necessary in order to enter into Christ's college. He takes the fools and makes them know the wonders of His dying love. Oh that you may become a disciple! "Write my name down, Sir," you say to the writer with the inkhorn by his side, and be you from now on a humble follower of the Lamb. Now, though I would not have those who are not disciples close their mouths whenever others sing, yet I do think there are some hymns in which they would behave more honestly if they did not join—for there are some expressions which

hardly ought to come from unconverted lips. Better far would it be if they would pray, "Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall show forth Your praise."

You may have a very sweet voice, my Friend, and may sing with admirable taste and in exquisite harmony any of the parts, but God does not accept the praise where the heart is absent. The best tune in the book is one called Hearts. The whole multitude of the disciples whom Jesus loves are the proper persons to extol the Redeemer's name. May you, dear Hearer, be among that company!

Then, in the next place, you will observe that the praise they rendered was joyful praise. "The whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice." I hope the doctrine that Christians ought to be gloomy will soon be driven out of the universe! There are no people in the world who have such a right to be happy, nor have such cause to be joyful as the saints of the living God! All Christian duties should be done joyfully—and especially the work of praising the Lord.

I have been in congregations where the tune was dolorous to the very last degree—where the time was so dreadfully slow that one wondered whether they would ever be able to sing through the 119th Psalm—whether, to use Watts's expression, eternity would not be too short for them to get through it! And altogether the spirit of the people has seemed to be so damp, so heavy, so dead that we might have supposed that they were met to prepare their minds for hanging rather than for blessing the ever-gracious God!

Why, Brethren, true praise sets the heart ringing its bells and hanging out its streamers! Never hang your flag at half-mast when you praise God! No! Run up every color, let every banner wave in the breeze and let all the powers and passions of your spirit exult and rejoice in God your Savior! They rejoiced. We are really most horribly afraid of being too happy. Some Christians think cheerfulness a very dangerous folly, if not a ruinous vice. That joyous Hundredth Psalm has been altered in all the English versions—

"All people that on earth do dwell,
Sing to the Lord with cheerful voice,
Him serve with fear, His praise forth tell,
Come you before Him and rejoice."

"Him serve with fear," says the English version. But the Scotch version has less thistle and far more rose in it. Listen to it, and catch its holy happiness—

"Him serve with mirth, His praise forth tell;
Come you before Him and rejoice."

How do God's creatures serve Him out of doors? The birds do not sit on a Sunday with folded wings, dolefully silent on the boughs of the trees! They sing as sweetly as may be even though the raindrops fall! As for the new-born lambs in the field—they skip to His praise though the season is damp and cold. Heaven and earth are lit up with gladness, and why

not the hearts and houses of the saints? "Him serve with mirth." Well said the Psalmist—"before Him exceedingly rejoice." It was joyful praise.

The next point we must mention is that it was demonstrative praise. They praised Him with their voices and with a loud voice. Propriety very greatly objects to the praise which is rendered by Primitive Methodists at times. Their shouts and hallelujahs are thought by some delicate minds to be very shocking. I would not, however, join in the censure, lest I should be numbered among the Pharisees who said, "Master, rebuke Your disciples." I wish more people were as earnest and even as vehement as the Methodists used to be.

In our Lord's day we see that the people expressed the joy which they felt—I am not sure that they expressed it in the most harmonious manner—but at any rate they expressed it in a hearty, lusty shout. They altogether praised with a loud voice. It is said of Mr. Rowland Hill that on one occasion someone sat on the pulpit stairs who sang in his ears with such a sharp shrill voice that he could endure it no longer, and said to the good woman, "I wish you would be quiet." She answered, "It comes from my heart," "Oh," said he, pray forgive me—sing away! Sing as loudly as you will."

And truly, dear Friends, though one might wish there were more melody in it, yet if your music comes from the heart we cannot object to the loudness, or we might be found objecting to that which the Savior could not and would not blame. Must we not be loud? Do you wonder that we speak out? Have not His mercies a loud tongue? Do not His kindnesses deserve to be proclaimed aloud? Were not the cries upon the Cross so loud that the very rocks were rent thereby—and shall our music be a whisper?

No, as Watts declares, we would—

"Loud as His thunders shout His praise, And sound it lofty as His Throne." If not with loud voices actually in sound, yet we would make the praise of God loud by our actions, which speak louder than any words! We would extol Him by great deeds of kindness, and love, and self-denial, and zeal so that our actions may assist our words. "The whole multitude praised Him with a loud voice." Let me ask every Christian here to do something in the praise of God—to speak in some way for his Master. I would say, speak today—if you cannot with your voice—speak by act and deed, but join in the hearty shout of all the saints of God while you praise and bless the name of our ever gracious Lord.

The praise rendered, though very demonstrative, was very reasonable—the reason is given—"for all the mighty works that they had seen." My dear Friends, we have seen many mighty works which Christ has done. I do not know what these disciples had seen. Certain it is that after Christ entered into Jerusalem He was generous with His miracles. The blind were healed, the deaf had their ears opened—many of those possessed with devils were delivered—and incurable diseases gave way at His word. I think we have the like reason in a spiritual sense. What has God worked? It has been marvelous—as our elders would tell you

if they could recount what God has done—the many who have come forward during the last fortnight to tell what God has done for their souls.

The Holy Spirit has met with some whom up to now no ministry had reached. Some have been convicted of sin who were wrapped up in self-righteous rags. Others have been comforted whose desponding hearts drew near unto despair. I am sure those Brethren who sat to see enquirers must have been astonished when they found some hundreds coming to talk about the things that make for their peace! It was blessed work, I doubt not, for them. They, therefore, would lead the strain.

But you have all in your measure seen something of it. During the meetings we have held we have enjoyed an overpowering sense of the Divine Presence. Without excitement there has been a holy bowing of spirit, and yet a blessed lifting up of hope, and joy, and holy fervor! The Master has cast sweet smiles upon His Church! He has come near to His beloved. He has given her the tokens of His affection and made her to rejoice with joy unspeakable! Any joy which we have towards Christ, then, will be reasonable enough, for we have seen His mighty works.

With another remark I shall close this first head—the reason for their joy was a personal one. There is no praise to God so sweet as that which flows from the man who has tasted that the Lord is gracious. Some of you have been converted during the last two or three months. Oh, you must bless Him! You must take the front rank now and bless His name for the mighty work which you have seen in yourself! The things which once were dear to you, you now abhor, and those things which seemed dry and empty are now sweet and full of savor. God has turned your darkness into light! He has brought you up out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay and has set your feet upon a rock! Shall not your established goings yield Him a grateful song? You shall bless Him!

Others here present have had their own children saved. God has looked on one family and another, and taken one, and two, and three. He has been pleased to lay His hand upon the elders among us and bless their families. Oh sing unto His name! Sing praises for the mighty works which we have seen! This will be commonplace talk enough to those of you who have not seen it—but those who have will feel the tears starting to their eyes as they think of son and daughter of whom they can say, "Behold, he prays!"

Saints of God, I wish I could snatch a firebrand from the altar of praise that burns before the great Throne of God— I wish I could fire your hearts with it—but it is the Master's work to do it. Oh, may He do it now! May every one of you feel as if you could cast your crown at His feet! As if you could sing like the cherubim and the seraphim, nor yield even the first place of gratitude to the brightest spirit before the Eternal Throne! This morning may it be truly said, "The whole multitude of the disciples rejoiced with a loud voice for all the mighty things which they had seen."—

"O come, loud anthems let us sing, Loud thanks to our Almighty King. For we our voices high should raise, When our salvation's Rock we praise. Into His Presence let us haste, To thank Him for His favors past! To Him address, in joyful songs, The praise that to His name belongs." II. I shall now lead you on to the second point—their praise found vent for itself in AN APPROPRIATE SONG. "Blessed is the King that comes in the name of the Lord! Peace in Heaven, and glory in the highest!" It was an appropriate song, if you will remember that it had Christ for its subject! "My heart is writing of a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the king."

No song is so sweet from believing lips as that which tells of Him who loved us and who gave Himself for us. This particular song sings of Christ in His Character of King—a right royal song, then—a melody fit for a coronation day. Crown Him! Crown Him Lord of all! That was the refrain. "Blessed be the King." It sang of that King as commissioned by the Most High, "who comes in the name of the Lord." Think of Christ as bearing Divine authority, as coming down to men in God our Father's name—as speaking what He has heard in Heaven, fulfilling no self-espoused errand, but a mission upon which the Divine Father sent Him according to His purpose and decree—all this is matter for music!

Oh bless the Lord, you saints, as you remember that your Savior is the Lord's Anointed—He has set Him on His Throne! Jehovah, who was pleased to bruise Him, has said, "Yet have I set My King upon My holy hill of Zion." See the Godhead of your Savior! He whom you adore, the Son of Mary, is the Son of God! He who did ride upon a colt, the foal of an ass, did also ride upon a cherub and did fly—yes, He rode upon the wings of the wind!

They spread their garments in the way, and broke down branches. It was a humble triumph, but long before this the angels had strewn His path with adoring songs. Before Him went the lightning, coals of fire were in His track, and up from His Throne went forth hailstones and coals of fire! Blessed be the King! Oh praise Him this day! Praise the King, Divine and commissioned of His Father!

The burden of their song was, however, of Christ present in their midst. I do not think they would have rejoiced so loudly and sweetly if He had not been there. That was the source and center of their mirth—the King riding upon a colt, the foal of an ass—the King triumphant! They could not but be glad when He revealed Himself. Beloved, our King is here! We sang at the beginning of this visitation, "Arise, O King of Grace, arise, and enter to Your rest!" You remember our singing the verse—

"O You that are the Mighty One, Your sword gird on Your thigh."

And King Jesus has done so in state—He has ridden prosperously—and out of the ivory palaces His heart has been made glad! And the King's daughter, all-glorious within, standing at His right hand, cannot but be glad, too! Loud to His praise wake every string of your heart and let your souls make the Lord Jesus the burden of their song!

This was an appropriate song, in the next place, because it had God for its object. They extolled God, God in Christ, when they thus lifted up their voices. They said, "Peace in Heaven, and glory in the highest." When we extol Christ, we desire to bless the infinite Majesty that gave Christ to us. Thanks be unto the Father for His unspeakable gift! O eternal God, we, Your creatures in this little world do unfeignedly bless You for Your great purpose and decree by which You did choose us to be illustrious exhibitions of Your majesty and love!

We bless You that You did give us Grace in Christ Your Son before the starry sky was spread abroad! We praise You, O God, and magnify Your name as we enquire, "What is man, that You are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you visit him?" How could You deign to stoop from all the Glory of Your infinity to be made Man, to suffer, to bleed, to die for us? "Give unto the Lord, O you mighty, give unto the Lord glory and strength. Give unto the Lord the glory that is due unto His name." Oh that I could give place to some inspired bard, some seer of old, who, standing before you with mouth streaming with holy eloquence, should extol Him that lives, but once was slain, and bless the God who sent Him here below that He might redeem unto Himself a people who should show forth His praise!

I think this song to have been very appropriate for another reason, namely, because it had the universe for its scope. It was not praise within walls as ours this morning—the multitude sung in the open air with no walls but the horizon— with no roof but the arch of Heaven! Their song, though it was from Heaven, did not stay there, but enclosed the world within its range. It was, "Peace in Heaven, and glory in the highest!" It is very singularly like that song of the angels, that Christmas carol of the spirits from on high when Christ was born—but it differs, for the angels' song was, "Peace on earth," and this at the gates of Jerusalem was, "Peace in Heaven."

It is the nature of song to spread itself. From Heaven the sacred joy began when angels sang, and then the fire blazed down to earth in the words, "Peace on earth." But now the song began on earth, and so it blazed up to Heaven with the words, "Peace in Heaven, and glory in the highest!" Is it not a wonderful thing that a company of poor beings like we here below can really affect the highest heavens? Every throb of gratitude which heaves our hearts glows through Heaven! God can receive no actual increase of Glory from His creature for He has infinite Glory and majesty—but yet the creature manifests that Glory.

A grateful man here below, when his heart is all on fire with sacred love, warms Heaven itself! The multitude sung of peace in Heaven as though the angels were established in their peaceful seats by the Savior—as though the war which God had waged with sin was now over because the conquering King was come! Oh let us seek after music which shall be fitted for other spheres! I would begin the music here and so my soul should rise. Oh for some heavenly notes to bear my passions to the skies! It was appropriate to the occasion because the universe was its sphere.

And it seems also to have been most appropriate because it had gratitude for its spirit. They cried aloud, "Blessed"—Blessed is the King." We cannot bless God and yet we do bless Him in the sense in which He blesses us. Our goodness cannot extend to Him, but we reflect the blessedness which streams from Him as light from the sun. Blessed be Jesus! My Brothers and Sisters, have you never wished to make Him happier? Have you not wished that you could extol Him? Let Him be exalted! Let Him sit on high! I have almost wished, even selfishly, that He were not so glorious as He is so that we might help to lift Him higher! Oh, if the crushing of my body, soul, and spirit would make Him one atom more glorious, I would not only consent to the sacrifice, but bless His name that He counted me worthy to do so!

All that we can do brings nothing to Him. Yet, Brethren, I would that He had His own. Oh that He rode over our great land in triumph! Would that King Jesus were as well known here now as He was once in Puritan times! Would that Scotland were as loyal to Him as in Covenanting periods! Would that Jesus had His majesty visible in the eyes of all men! We pray for this! We seek this! And among the chief joys our most chief joy is to know that God has highly exalted Him and given Him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow!

We have thus said something about the appropriateness of the song. May you, each of you, light upon such hymns as will serve to set forth your own case and show forth the mercy of God in saving you. Do not be slack in praising Him in such notes as may be most suitable to your own condition.

III. Thirdly, and very briefly—for I am not going to give much time to these men—we have INTRUSIVE OBJECTIONS. "Master, rebuke Your disciples." We know that voice—the old grunt of the Pharisee. What could he do otherwise? Such is the man and such must his communications be. While he can dare to boast, "God, I thank You that I am not as other men are," he is not likely to join in praises such as other men lift up to Heaven.

But why did these Pharisees object? I suppose it was first of all because they thought there would be no praise for themselves! If the multitude had been saying, "Oh these blessed Pharisees! These excellent Pharisees! What broad phylacteries! What admirable hems to their garments! How diligently and scrupulously they tithe their mint and their anise and their cummin! What a wonder that God should permit us, poor vile creatures, to look upon these super-excellent incarnations of virtue," I will be bound to say there would not have been a man among them who would have said, "Master, rebuke Your disciples." A proud heart never praises God for it hoards up praise for itself.

In the next place, they were jealous of the people. They did not feel so happy themselves and they could not bear that other people should be glad. They were like the elder brother who said, "Yet you never gave me a kid that I might make merry with my friends." Was that a reason why nobody else should be merry? A very ill reason, truly! Oh, if we cannot rejoice,

ourselves, let us stand out of the way of other people! If we have no music in our own hearts, let us not wish to stop those who have!

But I think the main point was that they were jealous of Jesus. They did not like to have Christ crowned with majesty. Certainly this is the drift of the human heart. It does not wish to see Jesus Christ extolled. Preach up morality or dry doctrine, or ceremonies and many will be glad to hear your notes. But preach up Jesus Christ and some will say, "Master, rebuke your disciples!" It was not ill advice of an old preacher to a young beginner when he said, "Preach nothing down but sin, and preach nothing up but Christ."

Brethren, let us praise nothing up but Christ! Have nothing to say about your Church. Say nothing about your denomination. Hold your tongue about the minister—but praise Christ—and I know the Pharisees will not like it! But that is an excellent reason to give them more of it, for that which Satan does not admire he ought to have more of. The preaching of Christ is the whip that flogs the devil. The preaching of Christ is the thunderbolt, the sound of which makes all Hell shake. Let us never be silent! We shall put to confusion all our foes if we do but extol Christ Jesus the Lord. "Master, rebuke Your disciples!"

Well, there is not much of this for Jesus Christ to rebuke in the Christian Church in the present day. There used to be—there used to be a little of what the world calls fanaticism. A consecrated cobbler once set forth to preach the Gospel in Hindustan. There were men who would go preaching the Gospel among the heathen, counting not their lives dear unto them. The day was when the Church was so foolish as to fling away precious lives for Christ's Glory! Ah, she is more prudent nowadays. Alas! Alas for your prudence! She is so calm and so quiet—no Methodist's zeal, now! Even that denomination which did seem alive has become most proper and most cold.

And we are so charitable, too. We let the most abominable doctrines be preached and we put our finger on our lip, and say, "There's so many good people who think so." Nothing is to be rebuked nowadays, Brethren! One's soul is sick of this! Oh, for the old fire again! The Church will never prosper till it comes once more. Oh, for the old fanaticism, for that, indeed, was the Spirit of God making men's spirits in earnest! Oh, for the old doing and daring that risked everything and cared for nothing except to glorify Him who shed His blood upon the Cross! May we live to see such bright and holy days again! The world may murmur but Christ will not rebuke.

IV. We come now to the last point, which is this—AN UNANSWERABLE ARGUMENT. He said, "If these should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out." Brothers and Sisters, I think that is very much our case. If we were not to praise God, the very stones might cry out against us! We MUST praise the Lord! Woe unto us if we do not! It is impossible for us to hold our tongues! Saved from Hell and be silent? Secure of Heaven and be ungrateful? Bought with precious blood and hold our tongues? Filled with the Spirit and not speak? Restrain from fear of feeble man with the Spirit's course within our souls? God forbid!

In the name of the Most High let such a thought be given to the winds! What? 0ur children are saved—the offspring of our loins brought to Christ! What? See them springing up like willows by the water courses, and no awakening of song, no gladness, no delight! 0h, then we were worse than brutes and our hearts would have been steeled and become as adamant. We must praise God! What? The King in our midst, King Jesus smiling into our souls, feasting us at His table, making His word precious to us, and not praise Him! Why if Satan could know the delight of Christ's company he might begin to love—but we, we were worse than devils if we did not praise the name of Jesus! What? The King's arm made bare, His enemies subdued, His triumphant chariot rolling through our streets, and no song!

Oh Zion, if we forget to sing let our right hand forget her cunning if we count not the King's triumph above our chief joy. What? The King coming! His advent drawing near, the signs of blessing in the sky and air abound, and yet no song! 0h, we must bless Him! Hosanna! Blessed is He that comes in the name of the Lord! But could the stones ever cry out? Yes, they could, and if they were to speak they would have much to talk of even as we have this day. If the stones were to speak they could tell of their Maker—and shall not we tell of Him who made us anew, and out of stones raised up children unto Abraham?

They could speak of ages long since gone—the old rocks could tell of chaos and order and the handiwork of God in various stages of creation's drama—and cannot we talk of God's decrees, of God's great work in ancient times, and all that He did for His Church? If the stones were to speak they could tell of their breaker, how he took them from the quarry, and made them fit for the temple—and cannot we tell of our Creator and Maker, who broke our hearts with the hammer of His Word that He might build us into His temple?

If the stones were to speak they would tell of their builder who polished them and fashioned them after the similitude of a palace—and shall not we talk of our Architect and Builder who has put us in our place in the temple of the living God? Oh, if the stones could speak they might have a long, long story to tell by way of memorial, for many a time has a great stone been rolled as a memorial unto God—and we can tell of Ebenezers, stones of help, stones of remembrance! The broken stones of the Law cry out against us, but Christ Himself, who has rolled away the stone from the door of the sepulcher, speaks for us.

Stones might well cry out, but we will not let them! We will hush their noise with ours! We will break forth into sacred song and bless the majesty of the Most High all our days! Let this day and tomorrow be especially consecrated to holy joys and may the Lord, in infinite mercy, fill your souls right full of it—both in practical deeds of kindness and benevolence and works of praise! Blessed be His name who lives forever and ever!